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SACRAMENTAL CATECHISM, 7

DESIGNED FOR

COMMUNICANTS

OLD AND YOUNG.

Wherein it is essayed to explain the Doctrine of the two Covenants; the offices which Christ executes with reference to the Covenant of Grace, both as to the MAKING, and ADMINISTRATION of it; and the different estates wherein he executes these offices: As also, an Explication of the two Sacraments, the Seals of that Covenant, particularly the Lord's Supper. Together with the method of preparation for, behaviour at, and after improvement of that holy ordinance.

In a Plain, Concise, and Scriptural manner.

To which is subjoined,
An Abstract of that Solemn Mode of public Admission of Young Communicants to the Lord's Table, which is practised in the parish of Kilmarnock.

By JAMES OLIPHANT, A. M. K

Translated from KILMARNOCK to DUNBARTON.

Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, AMOS iv. 12.

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DIFFERENT reasons, best known to the author himself, have occasioned this publication.—Those who, upon a careful perusal, shall be satisfied with the performance itself, will have little anxiety about what these may happen to be; and others who read it with a design to pick a quarrel, deserve rather to have their humour despised than gratified.—The more intelligent reader may, perhaps, find but few things altogether new in this composition, nor indeed has the author any desire to amuse with uninteresting novelties. But if those who err from the truth, cease not to republish and disseminate in some modern dress, the old Pelagian and Socinian heresies, which have been frequently refuted and condemned by the church of Christ, surely those who hold the truth in the love of it, ought to be at least as zealous in their efforts to establish Christians, that they be not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines.—The only sacramental catechism in the hands of the people of this country is Mr Willison's: Those however who are acquainted with that performance, may profitably peruse this notwithstanding, as there is not one answer the same in both, so far as I remember.—The most of writers upon the sacrament of the Lord's supper have confined themselves too strictly to that precise subject, without taking along a distinct consideration of the other doctrines with which it is essentially connected, and without a particular explication whereof, the sacrament cannot be duly understood. I have therefore endeavoured to lead Christians, in their preparation for that solemn ordinance, into a summary view of those great and fundamental truths, necessary to be known in order to distinct and profitable communicating; and the whole of these connected together, comprehend the most material points of vital religion.—In explaining the covenant of grace, I have chiefly followed the celebrated Withius, Dr Ridgley, Dr Gill, the old Mr Boston, &c. because, as I apprehend, they have more closely than many others, adhered to the views and expressions used in the holy scripture, upon that important subject.—Upon the whole: It is presumed, that the treasure and variety of divine truths contained in the following sheets, should entitle this catechism to more than one cursory review. It is therefore earnestly recommended, particularly to the people of this charge, to peruse the same carefully before each dispensation of the Lord's supper, and to attend strictly to the connection in which the substantial doctrines of Christianity are here represented.

KILMARNOCK

May 1772.



J. O.

SACRAMENTAL CATECHISM.

Q. WHAT is a covenant?

A. It is a free and mutual agreement between different parties, upon certain terms expressed.

Q. How many covenants for life and happiness to man are mentioned in scripture?

A. Two; and with reference to these, we read of but two public persons, the first and second Adams.

Q. With whom was the first covenant made?

A. With Adam, as representing his natural posterity, in whom they were all both feminally and federally.

Q. How does it appear that Adam in this covenant represented all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation?

A. From Adam being a type and figure of him that was to come, that is Christ, who is called the second man, and the last Adam; and these are represented as if the only two men in the world, because the two heads of their respective offspring: from the threatening taking place upon the sin of Adam, not on himself only, but on all his succeeding posterity; and it is not unusual thing with God to make over covenants to men, and their children unborn; as to Noah, Gen. ix. 9. to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7. to Israel, Deut. xxix. 14, &c.

Q. How is this covenant usually called?

A. It is called the covenant of innocence, the covenant of works, the covenant of life, and frequently the law or legal covenant.

Q. Why has it been called the covenant of innocence?

A. Because made with man in his upright state; and who as long as he kept this covenant, continued innocent; but when he broke it, he was no more so.

Q. Why called the covenant of works?

A. Because good works were required as the condition of it, nor was there provision made for any display of grace in case of transgression.

Q. Why is it sometimes designed the covenant of life?

4. *Of the Covenant of Works.*

A. Because life was the reward promised for keeping it.

Q. And why does the apostle call it **THE LAW**?

A. Because it likewise had the obligation of a law, being made with a subject, who was necessarily bound to comply with the demands thereof.

10 Q. What kind of obedience was required in this covenant?

A. Personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience to the law of nature written on man's heart in creation, and to other positive laws revealed to him.

Q. Was this obedience, as the condition of the covenant, to be so perpetual, as never to have an end?

A. His obedience was indeed to be without any interruption, so long as he continued in a state of probation: but when his trial was over, then though the same obedience was to be performed for ever, it was not to be considered as the condition of a covenant, but as the obligation of a law.

Q. How long was the probationary state to continue?

A. We are not able to determine; some suppose it would have been till Adam had children capable of obedience in their own persons; others conjecture, it was to have been no longer, than while the fruit of that season hung upon the forbidden tree.

Q. What life was promised as the reward for keeping it?

A. Life natural, spiritual, and eternal.

Q. What punishment was threatened for breaking of it?

A. Death, in its utmost latitude and duration.

Q. Was there any seal or sacrament annexed to the first covenant?

A. Yes; the tree of life was a sacrament or ordinance to confirm Adam's faith, that if he fulfilled the condition of the covenant, he should certainly obtain the blessing promised therein.

Q. But if Adam had eaten of the tree of life, after he sinned, should he upon that account have lived for ever?

A. By no means: God drove the man out of paradise, lest he should eat of the tree of life, as he did before the fall, which might have now had a pernicious tendency, in turning him aside from seeking salvation in the promised seed. Besides it now ceased to be a sacramental sign, and

to use it as such, after breaking the covenant, would have been another instance of profaneness.

Q. How came our first parents, who were created so perfectly holy, to break God's covenant?

A. Through the temptation of Satan, they ate of the forbidden fruit.

Q. Would not the transgression of any of the moral precepts have broken the covenant as well as this?

A. Doubtless: 'Curled is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law, to do them.'

Q. How was the first sin aggravated?

A. It was aggravated by a vain curiosity, discontentment, pride, and ambition, unbelief, bold and daring presumption, and the highest ingratitude: moreover, it was committed against an express warning, was a breach of trust, and ruinous to mankind.

20 Q. How was it ruinous to mankind?

A. As thereby the human nature was wholly corrupted, and mankind lost the image of God, and communion with him, and are under his wrath and curse.

Q. How does it appear that the human nature in its present state is wholly corrupt and depraved?

A. There must be a fixed propensity of nature to sin, inasmuch as every one who comes to act in the world as a moral agent is, in a greater or lesser degree, guilty: This evil propensity discovers itself in all men sinning so early, so continually, and from the remains of sin in the best; native depravity is further evident from men's proneness to idolatry, and so great and general a disregard of eternal things, even among those who enjoy a revelation; from the constant and general wickedness of mankind in all ages, and their obstinacy under a variety of most excellent means for reformation; from the afflictions and universal mortality which have entered, particularly the death of infants; as also, from the purchase and application of redemption.

Q. With what scripture evidence are these principles and assertions supported.

A. The following texts, among others, are very express, Gen. vi. 5. 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his

heart, were only evil continually.' See also Job xv. 14, 16. Psal. iv. 2. Rom. iii. 9, — 24. And this is owing principally to the first transgression, Rom. v. 12, 16, — 19. 'By ONE MAN sin entered into the world.' — 'Judgment was by ONE to condemnation.' — 'By ONE MAN's offence death reigned.' — 'By the offence of ONE judgment came upon all men to condemnation.' — 'By ONE MAN's disobedience many were made sinners.'

Q. Did our first parents die that very day they ate the forbidden fruit?

A. They died spiritually that very moment, and also became liable to natural and eternal death.

Q. Why was man's natural life continued longer?

A. That the seed he represented might be born, many of whom were to be saved by a better Testament.

25 Q. Can any man enter into the promised life without having the perfect righteousness required in this covenant fulfilled in him?

A. No: The perfection of the law cannot be set aside, upon any pretence whatever; every man therefore must completely fulfil the righteousness of it himself, or by the Spirit of faith be united to Christ, in whom he hath such a righteousness for justification, and sufficient strength for perfecting holiness.

Q. Did the doing and dying of Christ then disannul or abrogate this covenant?

A. No: The second Adam only finished that perfect obedience, wherein the first failed, and by enduring the penalty, made satisfaction for sin.

Q. Seeing this covenant is not disannulled, who are to be considered as still under it?

A. All Christless sinners, who are strangers to the better covenant, and discover the same, in seeking righteousness not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, and who presumptuously expect acceptance and salvation by some partial obedience of their own, which they may ignorantly call sincere.

Q. In what manner did God resolve to display his mercy in the salvation of sinners?

A. By making another covenant with his chosen, Psalm lxxxix. 3, 28.

Q. How is this covenant called?

A. The covenant of redemption, the covenant of grace, a covenant of life, of peace, of promise, and the new covenant or testament.

30 Q. Why is it called by some divines the covenant of redemption?

A. With reference to Christ, who engaged therein from eternity, to pay the ransom price.

Q. Why is it commonly called by men the covenant of grace?

A. Because the covenant itself, and all the blessings of it, flow from the free favour of God; and the ultimate end of it is the glory of the grace of God.

Q. Are these two different covenants?

A. They ought rather to be held as one and the same, under different considerations. The making of this covenant between the Father and the Son from eternity, is called by some the covenant of redemption; and the administration of the same covenant, in the gospel offer, is designed by others the covenant of grace.

Q. Why said to be a covenant of life, Mal. iii. 5?

A. Because eternal life, was, by God that cannot lie, promised in it before the world began; which promise of life is in Christ Jesus the covenant head.

Q. Why designed also a covenant of peace?

A. Because, by the blood of it, the offended Judge is become a God of peace; sinners, who were enemies, are reconciled to God, and the enmity between Jews and Gentiles is removed.

35 Q. Why stiled the covenant of promise?

A. Because it is dispensed to sinners, under all the periods of the church, in full and free promises.

Q. And why called the new covenant?

A. As distinguished from the legal form in which it was administered under the Mosaic dispensation; and because it can never wax old, or lose its efficacy.

Q. With whom was it made?

A. With Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

Q. How does it appear that the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the head of the elect?

Of the Covenant of Grace.

A. From their being chosen in him, before the foundation of the world; the covenant was confirmed of God IN CHRIST, before the manifestation of it to Abraham; the promises of grace and glory made to the elect in it, were made to them as considered in Christ, and before the world began, Eph i. 3, 4. The blessings of it were given them in Christ, before they had an actual existence, 2 Tim. i. 9. All that Christ did and suffered was in their room, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them; in a word, the federal headship of Christ may be concluded from Adam being the representative of all his natural offspring, in which he was the figure of him that was to come.

Q. What do you mean by the elect?

A. A certain number of mankind, whom God did choose in Christ from eternity

40 *Q.* To what were they chosen?

A. To salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

Q. When was the covenant of grace made?

A. It is his own promise and purpose given us in Christ Jesus BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN.

Q. When was it first published to men?

A. Immediately after the fall, in the first promise, and farther opened up to Noah, Abraham, the church at Sinai, and by the Old Testament prophets, till at last the clearest edition of it was given out under the gospel.

Q. What was the meritorious condition of the covenant of works?

A. That Christ, as second Adam, should fulfil all the righteousness required in the broken law, and atone for the breach of it.

Q. Wherein then does the righteousness of Christ consist?

A. In his holiness of nature, obedience of life, and sufferings even unto death.

45 *Q.* Why was holiness of nature necessary?

A. Because God having made man upright, the law required that this purity should be retained by him, and transmitted to his posterity; and therefore condemns every unholy creature.

Q. What was the necessity of his yielding perfect obedience?

A. Because herein the first Adam, and all his posterity likewise have failed; and yet the whole law must be obeyed, in the most perfect manner, before man can enter into life.

Q. And why was satisfaction for sin so indispensable?

A. Because of the truth of God in the threatening, and his purity and justice as Governor of the world.

Q. Can faith, repentance, and sincere obedience be properly called the condition of the covenant of grace?

A. I am much rather disposed to consider these as belonging to the administration of the covenant, as it is evident they are PROMISED therein, after a most absolute manner. As to faith in particular, it is the GIFT of God, Eph. ii. 8. As to repentance, the Prince and Saviour exalted GIVES it, Acts v. 31. And in like manner sincere obedience, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. 'I WILL put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.' And now I ask, with what propriety of language can a FREE GIFT be called the condition of a covenant?

Q. Whom do the promises of the new covenant respect?

A. They partly respect Christ himself, the head of it, and partly terminate upon believers, his seed.

50 Q. What promises directly respect Christ himself?

A. All of them may be reduced to three heads. The promises of assistance, acceptance, and reward.

Q. What reward was promised unto him?

A. A new interest in God, as his God and Father; a glorious exaltation; a numerous seed; his being appointed heir of all things, and obtaining dominion over all his and his people's enemies.

Q. What blessings are promised in the covenant to believers, Christ's seed?

A. An interest in God himself, and all his perfections; in Christ, and all his fulness; and in the Holy Spirit, with all his gifts and graces.

Q. What good is contained in that great promise, 'I will be to them a God'?

A. Much more than the heart of man can conceive;

particularly, that his wisdom shall direct us, his power protect us, his justice acquit us, his holiness sanctify us, his mercy shall pity us, his goodness supply all our wants, his truth implement the promises; that his all-sufficiency shall be the extent of our portion, his eternity the date of our happiness, his unchangeableness our security for all, and his providence shall make all things work together for our good.

Q. What blessings are wrapt up in Christ the great mercy promised?

A. He that hath the Son hath life and all things; particularly he is promised, as light to the blind, life to the dead, liberty to the captives, food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, riches to the poor, a physician to the diseased; as a prophet for the ignorant, a ransom for the guilty, strength to the weak, an example to his followers, a comforter to the cast down, a rest to the weary, a father of the fatherless, a deliverer to the tempted, &c &c

55 Q. What blessings do they enjoy, who receive the promise of the Spirit?

A. They receive along with himself his gifts and graces; particularly, he is in them the Author and Spirit of faith; the Spirit of repentance; the Spirit of grace and supplication; the Spirit of wisdom and revelation; the Spirit of light, life, and liberty; the Spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind; the Spirit of conviction, regeneration, consolation, and joy; the Spirit of adoption, mortification of sin and holiness; the Spirit of praise and gratitude; and a Spirit of glory, giving the assurance and earnest of it, and sealing up the believer to the day of redemption.

Q. Can any creature need or wish for any good that is not contained in these promises?

A. Surely no; this covenant of promise is all our desire, and all our salvation.

Q. What is the nature of the promises?

A. They are great and precious; ordered in all things, and sure; and suited to every case. They were strictly conditional to Christ, and therefore free to us, who are poor, miserable, blind, and naked.

Q. What is the origin and source of the promises?

A. The free and sovereign love of God, is the proper fountain of them; and the promised blessings are conveyed to us through the mediation of Christ, by the power and grace of the Holy Ghost.

Q. To whom are the promises directed? Or who may warrantably embrace them?

A. The promise, in the offer, is, UNTO YOU, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts ii. 39.

60 *Q.* By whom are the promises actually possessed?

A. By believers in Christ only: he that believeth HATH everlasting life. If ye be Christ's, then ye are heirs of the promise.

Q. Can this covenant of promise be broken, as the covenant of works was?

A. No: The God of truth hath sworn by his holiness, saying, 'My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that is gone out of my lips: therefore mercy shall be built up for ever,' Psalm lxxxix.

Q. What ought to be the temper, character, and conduct of those who are brought within this covenant of promise?

A. Being a chosen generation, they are an holy nation, a peculiar people, zealous of good works, that they may shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Q. Is holy obedience a matter left to their own option, or is it indispensibly binding upon them?

A. As sure as God liveth, and they are creatures, they are not, they desire not, THEY CANNOT BE without law to God, but under the law to Christ.

Q. What is the law of God they are under to Christ, as their King and Head?

A. It always was, still is, and for ever will be, the law of the ten commandments, contained Exod. xx. and from thence transcribed into our public catechisms.

65 *Q.* But does not the apostle Paul affirm concerning believers, that they are not under the law; yea, that they are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; and that they are delivered from the law, where they were held, Rom. vi. 14. vii. 4, 6.

A. For solution of this difficulty let it be observed, that although believers are dead to the law as a covenant of works, yet they are necessarily under it as a rule of moral conduct; though it is at an end as to the form of the administration of it by Moses, yet the matter, the sum, and substance of it, remains firm and unalterable; believers are delivered from it as a yoke of bondage, but continue under it as a perfect law of liberty; though they are rescued from the curse and condemnation of it, they are not exempt from obedience to it; and though they are not to seek for justification by it; yet being justified freely by grace, they are under the greatest obligations, and actually have the strongest inclination constantly to obey all its commands.

Q. Why is the moral law so perpetually and indispensibly binding upon all, in every state?

A. Because founded in the nature and perfections of God, and necessarily resulting from our relation to him as his rational creatures.

Q. Why ought Christ's covenant-people to be so careful in maintaining obedience to the holy law?

A. From regard to the authority and excellence of the law itself; as this is one design of their election, redemption, and effectual calling; as this is a proper expression of gratitude to God; as necessary to our escaping of eternal misery, and to qualify us for heaven; as an evidence of the truth and sincerity of our faith, and interest in the covenant; as useful to adorn our profession, adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and to glorify our heavenly Father; as hereby too, our own inward peace and comfort are maintained, our assurance of salvation is promoted, and our future reward is enlarged.

Q. What are the most cogent motives to good works?

A. The authority of the Lawgiver, and the terrors of the Lord should persuade thereunto; as also the love of Christ constraineth us, the beauty of his example, the encouragement of the promises, and the assured assistance of the Holy Spirit.

Q. But if Christ's children forsake his law, and break his commandments, what then?

A. He will visit their transgressions with the rod, and

their iniquities with stripes. Tho' he forgive the sin, he will take vengeance upon their inventions, Psal. xcix, 8.

70 Q. *Shall the fatherly chastisements, here promised, be effectual to reclaim them from their backslidings?*

A. No doubt of it; they shall have reason to say with David, It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes; before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy word.

Q. *Is this all that they shall suffer, or that their sins deserve?*

A. Their sins, as much as the sins of others, yea more so, deserve damnation; but being delivered from the curse and the wrath to come, by a standing interest in the surety's righteousness, they are now chastened of the Lord that they may not afterwards be condemned with the world.

Q. *Can any then, who are once brought into the covenant, ever lose their interest in it?*

A. How is it possible they can, considering that the everlasting covenant bears, that God will not turn away from them to do them good, but will put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him?

Q. *Have these peculiar doctrines of Christianity, gratuitous election, free justification, infallible perseverance, &c. any sort of tendency to encourage licentiousness, or to make void the holy law?*

A. God forbid. Such indeed have been the groundless cavils of ignorant and foolish men, who are enemies to the doctrines of grace. But by such principles, and by them alone, holiness is promoted, and the moral law is established in its perfection, spirituality, and perpetuity; whereas an easy matter it were to prove every opposite principle unfriendly to holiness, and tending to subvert and destroy the law, as though itself and its glorious Author were as mutable as the creature. Yea, I suspect it follows from some modern principles, that imperfection is not only tolerated, but established by the law, which if true, the commandment would no longer be what it is, holy, just, and good.

Q. *How are sinners first brought into this holy covenant?*

A. By taking hold of it by faith, and uniting with

Christ the covenant head, we are personally and savingly inflated in it.

75 Q. *What is the fittest and most hopeful season of taking hold of God's covenant, or closing with Christ?*

A The period of youth. Then conscience is more easily awakened, the heart not yet so hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, vicious habits are not confirmed, the affections are more pliant, worldly cares are fewer, and God has promised special encouragements to those who early give themselves to him in covenant. Prov. viii. 17.

Q. *What are the chief obstructions peculiar to young persons, and which they ought to watch and pray against?*

A. The main and fundamental obstruction to religion in every age, is the universal depravity of human nature, of delaying or deceiving themselves in this matter through self-conceit, by the pleasures and vanities of youth, from false prejudices against religion as intolerably severe; they are apt to be heedless and inconsiderate, rash and presumptuous, to entertain sanguine hopes of long life, and to be misled by worthless companions.

Q. *What are the evidences of a saving interest in the covenant of grace?*

A. Such as have fled for refuge to the surety of this better Testament, they cordially acquiesce in, and approve of it as ordered in all things; they are content with the duties, as well as the privileges of the covenant, with the discipline, as well as the reward of it; the love of God habitually predominates in them; the doing and dying of the Mediator is the alone ground of their confidence before the Lord; the promises of the covenant are a satisfying portion to them, and the spirit and laws of it are within their hearts.

Q. *Wherein do the covenant of works and the covenant of grace differ?*

A. The covenant of works was made with the first Adam, a mere man, and fallible; the covenant of grace with Christ the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who changeth not: the one was a covenant of friendship, the other a covenant of reconciliation; the end of the

Of the Offices of Christ, relating to the Covenant. 15

covenant of works was, to shew man his duty to God; but the great end of the covenant of grace is to shew the riches of God's mercy to sinners; the old covenant terrifies a guilty criminal, and sentences him to the curse; but the new covenant opens a door of hope, by which enter peace and pardon, comfort and strength, holiness and salvation.

Q. Wherein do they agree?

A. They agree in that the author of both is God, his glory and man's happiness are the ends of the one and the other, and in that light was the thing promised all along.

80 Q. What is the general office of Christ, with relation to the covenant?

A. It is his being the Mediator between God and man.

Q. What particular offices are included herein?

A. Several offices, in relation both to the MAKING and ADMINISTRATION of the covenant.

Q. What characters does he bear as to the making of the covenant?

A. He is the Redeemer, the Surety, and the sacrificing Priest of it.

Q. What offices is Christ vested with, respecting the administration of it?

A. He is the Trustee, the Testator, the Prophet, Intercessor, and King of the covenant.

Q. What does the title Redeemer suppose, with reference to us?

A. That we are under bondage and captivity to sin, Satan, the vanities of the world, the fear of death, and dread of hell, through breach of the first covenant.

85 Q. How did the right of redemption belong to Christ?

A. As no man could redeem himself, far less his brother, the right of redemption by law fell to him who was our near kinsman, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

Q. What was the duty or office of the kinsman Redeemer under the old law?

A. He was to marry the widow of the deceased, to redeem the mortgaged inheritance, to ransom his poor kinsmen from bondage, and to avenge the blood of his slain relation upon the destroyer.

16 *Of the Offices of Christ, relating to the Covenant.*

Q. Does our kinsman Redeemer Christ perform all these in a spiritual sense, for us his poor kinsmen?

A. Yes: he hath espoused our nature, which makes way for the mystical union; he hath brought back the forfeited inheritance of glory and eternal life; he redeems from the curse of the law, from a present evil world, and from the dominion of sin; and avenges our blood upon the arch enemy Satan, destroying him that had the power of death, and delivering them who through fear of death were subject to bondage.

Q. How does Christ redeem the elect from spiritual bondage and captivity?

A. Both by price, giving his life a ransom for many; and by power, when he looseth the bands of the prisoners, and admits them into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Q. For whom did Christ become the Surety of the better Testament?

A. For a certain number given him of the Father, called in scripture, his seed, the children of God, his sheep, his friends, his church, his people, a peculiar people, and the like.

90 *Q. For what did he become their Surety?*

A. To pay the debt of punishment for all their sins, original and actual; and also for the debt of perfect obedience to the law, as the only condition of life and salvation, according as it was stated in the first covenant.

Q. Was it not necessary then, that he should likewise become a sacrificing Priest?

A. Yes: This covenant of reconciliation between an offended God and sinners, could not be MADE but through the mediation of a sacrificing Priest.

Q. What do you mean by such a Priest?

A. A public person, who deals with an offended God, in name of the guilty for reconciliation, by a sacrifice, which he offers to God upon an altar, being thereunto called of God, that he may be accepted.

Q. Who were the most eminent types of Christ as a priest?

A. Aaron the Jewish high priest, as also the other priests of the Levitical order; but in a more glorious manner, Melchizedek, as the apostle to the Hebrews declares.

Of the Offices of Christ, relating to the Covenant. 17

Q. Wherein did he infinitely excel them all?

A. They were merely men, and mortal men too, yea they themselves were sinners, nor had they any thing of their own to offer, nor indeed was there any end of their offerings, and all were but figures of him that was to come; whereas Christ himself is the substance, a Priest of another tribe, is God as well as man, was separated from sinners; hath an unchangeable priesthood, and by the once offering of himself thro' the eternal Spirit, made a proper, perfect, and effectual atonement for all his people, in every period of time and nation of the world.

95 Q. Upon whom is the ADMINISTRATION of the covenant devolved?

A. Upon the Mediator himself; who is therefore constituted the Trustee, the Testator, the Prophet, Intercessor, and King of the covenant.

Q. Why do you call him the TRUSTEE of the covenant?

A. Because it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, that of his fulness we may all receive, and grace for grace.

Q. How does he convey these blessings to his people?

A. As the glorious TESTATOR, he conveys all the blessings of his Testament, in a way of rich and free legacies to sinners of mankind.

Q. What blessings does he dispoise by way of legacy in his Testament?

A. All the benefits of the new covenant, **even HIMSELF**, and **ALL THINGS** in and with him.

Q. To whom do these legacies or blessings appertain?

A. They were eternally designed for the elect, they are actually possessed by true believers, and they are freely offered in the gospel to sinners of mankind as such.

100 Q. Why was he constituted the prophet of the covenant?

A. That, as the messenger of the covenant he might reveal it; that as the faithful witness he might confirm the truth of it; and that as the interpreter, one among a thousand, he might effectually teach the mysteries of it, to our salvation.

Q. Upon what ground is Christ admitted an advocate or INTERCESSOR?

A. There could have been no room to plead our cause in heaven, if he had not before redeemed us to God, with his own precious blood, upon earth.

Q. *Is not his intercession always prevalent?*

A. Most certainly; as a prince he hath power with God, and prevails. For he intercedes in virtue of a commission from the Father; there is likewise an infinite dignity derived from the person of Christ to his intercession, as well as to his sacrifice; the matter and end of his intercession is so agreeable to his Father's will and glory, that he can no more reject his suit, than deny himself; and accordingly we have already many instances of his success.

Q. *What ends are accomplished by his intercession?*

A. The preservation of the church, the mission of the Spirit, the mystical union, security from condemnation, acceptance at the throne of grace, relief under temptations, progression in holiness, perseverance in grace, an abundant entrance into heaven, and a participation of his own glory.

Q. *Of what importance is his kingly office, in the administration of the covenant?*

A. As Lord and King he appoints ordinances and ambassadors for bringing sinners into the covenant, and for confirming the covenanted; and effectually subdues the elect to himself, by the power of the Spirit accompanying the same.

105 *Q.* *How does the King of saints rule and govern them after this?*

A. He writes the law of his covenant upon their hearts, gives them the rewards of his grace in the course of their obedience, blesses them with the discipline of the covenant, in case of disobedience; gives them repentance for, and remission of their daily sins; affords them defence and refuge whilst in this life they are among their enemies; and at last, puts them in full possession of the crown of life, the inheritance incorruptible, and the kingdom that cannot be moved.

Q. *In what estate does the Mediator execute these offices, with relation to the covenant?*

A. Both in a state of humiliation, and in a state of exaltation.

Q. What do you mean by Christ's humiliation?

A. His taking upon him the form of a bond-servant, and being found in fashion as a man, becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

Q. What was the cause of so deep humiliation?

A. Nothing but his own, and his Father's love to sinners of mankind.

Q. Wherein did Christ humble himself?

A. In his birth, life, death, and after his death till his resurrection. See Larg. Cat.

110 *Q. Why was it necessary he should have humbled himself so low, as to be a CHILD BORN for us?*

A. That he might be our near kinsman; that he might present human nature again to the supreme Judge as perfectly pure as the holy law requires; and moreover, that he might be capable of obedience, sympathy, and suffering.

Q. Ought not this condescension of Christ to be wondrous in our eyes?

A. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness! The glory of the eternal God veiled in our nature! The Father of eternity becoming a creature of time! and the Holy One of Israel made sin for us; which is infinitely more than had the sun been converted into a clod of dust, or the highest seraph in heaven into a crawling worm!

Q. How did Christ humble himself in his life?

A. He was made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, and the wrath of God.

Q. What law was the Mediator made under?

A. He conformed indeed to the ceremonial and judicial institutions both; but his chief design was to fulfil all the righteousness of the MORAL LAW, as a covenant of works, which he magnified and made honourable.

Q. Why was he made under the law?

A. Whatever obedience he himself could owe to it, as vested with our nature, yet doubtless his obeying it as a BOND SERVANT, was to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

115 *Q. What miseries in life did the Mediator undergo?*

A. Persecution, temptation, desertion, and such infirmities of our nature, as were sinless and common.

Q. By whom was he persecuted?

A. Of a truth, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against the holy Child Jesus.

Q. What persecution did he suffer from Herod?

A. When an infant, Herod sought his life, and had not his parents, divinely warned, fled with him into Egypt, he had been slain with the children of Bethlehem.

Q. What mal-treatment had he from the Jews?

A. They would not own his glory as the Son of God; they questioned his mission, though confirmed by many incontestible miracles; they reproached him as a man gluttonous, a wine bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners; they asserted his miracles to be wrought by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils; sometimes they besought him to depart out of their coasts, and refused to give him entertainment in their houses; yea, they attempted to take away his life before his hour was come.

Q. What did he suffer under temptation?

A. He suffered being tempted in the wilderness to question his Sonship; to presumption and self-murder; to idolatry and devil worship: In fine, he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, that he might know how to succour those who are tempted.

120 *Q. Had he any affliction from his disciples amidst his last sufferings?*

A. Yes: he was betrayed by one, thrice denied by another, and forsaken by all the rest.

Q. Is the treachery of Judas prejudicial to the truth of Christianity?

A. Far from it; on the contrary, his character and conduct is a strong confirmation of it. Though our Lord knew from the beginning who should betray him, he did not hesitate to admit Judas a witness of his whole private life and doctrine, not regarding in the least what advantage he might take of any thing he said or did.

Q. What occasioned the indignities which the Mediator suffered in our world?

A. Those above mentioned and others, were without any pretext or form of law; but at last he is prosecuted,

Of the Sufferings and Innocence of Christ.

tried, and condemned before a court of judicature for alledged crimes both against the state and the church.

Q. What crimes against the state was he charged with?

A. The Jews accused him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying, That he himself was a King.

Q. Was it then from loyalty to Cæsar, and zeal for the Roman government, they delivered him?

A. Far from it: had he been indeed an enemy to Cæsar, they would have been his most resolute followers and adventurers; being quite impatient of a foreign yoke.

125 *Q. What impiety against the church was he impeached for?*

A. The high priest concluded that he spoke blasphemy, because he asserted himself to be the Christ, the Son of God, in such an high sense, as that in so saying he made himself equal with God.

Q. Was he convicted by the testimony of witnesses, as guilty of any crime whatever?

A. No such thing: his enemies indeed sought false witnesses against him to put him to death, but found none: yea, though many witnesses came, yet found they none.

Q. If there is no legal proof of guilt in him, was there sufficient evidence of perfect innocence?

A. That there was: Judas the traitor, Pilate the judge, and the centurion with his band, concurred in attesting his integrity.

Q. How did Judas the traitor attest it?

A. He repented, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the INNOCENT blood.'

Q. How did Pilate, who condemned him, attest the same?

A. He took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this JUST PERSON.

130 *Q. What testimony did the Roman centurion and his band bear to Christ.*

A. When they saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, TRULY THIS WAS THE SON OF GOD.

Q. Could not he have prevented being delivered into the hands of his enemies?

A. No doubt he could: when he asked the band led on by Judas, Whom seek ye? and told them, I am he, they went backward and fell on the ground: He afterwards observed to them, how he might pray to his Father, and he would presently give him more than twelve legions of angels.

Q. What indignities did he suffer from the Gentiles, as hinted at above?

A. Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate, who condemned Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

Q. How was he otherwise insulted by Jews and Gentiles during this last scene of suffering?

A. Some began to spit upon him, and to buffet him; they all preferred Barabbas to him, and derided him in his several offices, besides denying his supreme deity.

Q. How did they deny his divinity and Sonship?

A. 'If thou be the Son of God,' said they, 'come down from the cross. He trusted in God: let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.'

135 *Q. How did they contemn the great Prophet of the church?*

A. They smote him with the palms of their hands, after blindfolding him, and said, PROPHECY unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee.

Q. How did they express their blasphemy against his priesthood?

A. The chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, himself he CANNOT SAVE.

Q. And how was he derided in his regal dignity?

A. They put on him a scarlet robe, and when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand, and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, HAIL KING OF THE JEWS.

Q. Besides these, and what other bodily torments he endured, what did he suffer in his soul?

A. He conflicted with the terrors of death, and the powers of darkness, and felt and bore the weight of God's wrath.

Q. What may he be supposed to have suffered from the terrors of death, and the powers of darkness?

A. During that hour, the devil, who had the power of death, probably had a great hand in setting before his view, the terrors of God's wrath due to sin, with design either to drive our Saviour to despair, or induce him to repent of his undertaking, or at least to take some indirect means to decline suffering.

140 *Q.* When did he bear the wrath of God?

A. All along, but in a more remarkable manner and measure, in the garden of Gethsemane, and upon the cross.

Q. How does it appear that he bore the wrath of God in the garden?

A. Being in an agony, he said, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;' and he prayed, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.'

Q. How do you know that he endured the wrath of God upon the cross?

A. There, Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

Q. Was not Christ the object of his Father's love notwithstanding?

A. Yes. He was always his delight, and particularly it PLEASED the Lord to bruise him.

Q. Did he undergo all these sufferings voluntarily or of necessity?

A. He was quite voluntary. The Jews indeed took, condemned, and crucified him in a violent manner, and, without asking his consent, but not against his will. Accordingly, he was angry with Peter for dissuading him from suffering; he longed for his bloody baptism, and hastened Judas to do his part quickly. When they would have made him a King he hid himself, but when they came to make him a sacrifice he frankly surrendered. Tho' his enemies went backward, and fell to the ground, he would not fly; nor at his trial, make any defence that

might bring him off. 'No man, saith he, taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of MYSELF; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.'

145 Q. *How does it appear that Christ really died?*

A. When the soldiers came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, one of them with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout BLOOD and WATER. And he that saw it bare record, and his record being true, is an absolute demonstration of the reality of his death; and also his continuing in the grave till the third day.

Q. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?*

A. Yes, because without shedding of blood is no remission: And it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Q. *Could the blood of any, or of all the creatures expiate sin?*

A. It is impossible, saith the scripture. The blood of Jesus Christ ONLY cleanseth us from sin.

Q. *Whether then should the death of Christ be viewed as a martyrdom, a ransom, or an example?*

A. Chiefly as a ransom, or as the sacrifice of a priest.

Q. *But did not Christ likewise set us an example in his sufferings?*

A. Yes: he set us a glorious example of patience, trust, resignation, meekness, fortitude, and forgiveness of injuries, as to the manner in which he bore his sufferings.

150 Q. *But I ask, Was the setting us an example the only end and design of his sufferings even unto death?*

A. By no manner of means. His death, at this rate, could not have been of the least advantage to those who died before Christ was crucified; and the saints under the New, as well as those under the Old Testament, might have been carried to heaven without it, especially considering that they were now compassed about with a still greater cloud of witnesses. But besides and above all, who would wish to die as he did, in an agony, sorrowful and sore amazed, under the wrath of God, and, as it were, abandoned of heaven and earth.

Q. And was not his death a further confirmation of his doctrine.

A. He was indeed a witness for the truth to the last, but before that, his doctrine was sufficiently confirmed by a number of the most incontestible and beneficent miracles.

Q. But, independent of all miracles, whether before, at, or after his death, would his death have been a proper confirmation of his religion?

A. It would not. This much indeed would have appeared from his being a martyr to his doctrine, that he himself at least believed it to be true; but it is easy to suppose, that one may so firmly believe a lie, or be so obstinate, as to give his body to be burnt rather than relinquish it. But the Christian religion seems to be more amply confirmed by the joyful and triumphant deaths of a noble army of martyrs, than by the mournful exit of Christ himself.

Q. What great and glorious ends in general were accomplished by the sufferings and death of Christ?

A. Christ by his death made a proper, real, and complete satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of the world, Rom. iii. 25, 26. He brought in everlasting righteousness, whereby the law of God is magnified and made honourable, Dan. ix. 24. Confirmed the new covenant, and rendered his testament of force, Heb. ix. 16. Condemned sin, and destroyed this work of the devil, Rom. viii. 3. Bruised the old serpent himself, and destroyed him that had the power of death, Heb. ii. 14. Opened up a new and living way of access into the holiest of all, Heb. x. 19, 20. Abolished the enmity between Jews and Gentiles, and reconciled both unto God in one body, by the cross, Eph. ii. 15, 16. He hath illustriously displayed the glory and harmony of all the divine perfections, John xii. 28. Hereby too, honour and glory redounds to himself, John xii. 23. And having made his soul an offering for sin, a numerous seed shall arise from age to age, to serve him, and be to him for a name and a praise in the earth, Isa. liii. 10.

Q. What blessings does every believer, in particular, receive from the death and sacrifice of our great high priest?

A. Pardon, peace, and acceptance; the Spirit of adoption, and holiness; victory over all enemies; and admission into heaven at last.

155 *Q.* *What miracles attended Christ's death?*

A. The sun was darkened at noon, graves were opened by an earthquake, and the vail of the temple was rent in twain.

Q. *What mysteries of godliness are to be seen and adored in the crucifixion of Christ?*

A. Here we find the everlasting fountain of joy exceeding sorrowful! The perfection of beauty with his visage marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men! The Creator and proprietor of all, destitute of every thing in life and death! God blessed for ever, made a curse for us! Behold here, communicants, the creditor become surety for the debtor, and paying the debt which was owing to himself! The judge of all the earth brought under condemnation! The Prince and Lord of life stooping to the dust of death! Here we see justice raging against the innocent, and absolving the guilty without any injustice! Sin punished, and the sinner pardoned! the debt paid, and yet forgiven! the greatest good brought out of the greatest evil! Jesus crucified in weakness, like a slave, between two malefactors; and yet, at the same time, sitting upon a cross as upon a chariot of state, granting pardon, and spoiling principalities and powers.

Q. *How did Christ humble himself after his death?*

A. He was buried, and continued in the grave till the third day; which is sometimes called his descending into hell.

Q. *Can we conceive, that Christ actually went into hell, the place of torment, at, or after his death?*

A. Not at all, it is a Popish fiction: The supposition that he went into a prison, where the souls of the Old Testament saints were detained from heaven, and preached the gospel to them there, is very absurd; and no less groundless is it to imagine, that he descended locally into hell to triumph over the devil.

Q. *What then is the true meaning of his descending into hell?*

A. The Hebrew and Greek words, which we translate *hell*, signify not only that place of torment, but likewise the GRAVE, or the UNSEEN STATE, 1 Sam. ii. 6. Jon. ii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 55. Rev. xx. 13. And in this last sense only it is meant of Christ, when it is said, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in HELL.'

160 *Q.* *What were the ends, uses, and effects of Christ's burial?*

A. Thereby the verity of his death is demonstrated, for his friends would never have buried him alive, nor indeed would Pilate deliver the body to them, till he was certified by the centurion that he was really dead; and if any doubt could remain after all, it must be removed by his burial. And by this several types and prophecies were fulfilled. And hereby he hath destroyed the last enemy; pursued him to his strong hold the grave, and snatched victory from him; and now the grave is perfumed and made a safe resting place for the saints, till the morning of the resurrection.

Q. *How was the Mediator of the covenant exalted after such humiliation?*

A. He was exalted in his victorious resurrection, triumphant ascension, glorious sitting at the right hand of God, prevalent intercession there, and shall be further exalted at his second appearance and kingdom.

Q. *What was the necessity of his resurrection?*

A. It was necessary in respect of our faith and happiness, the establishment of Christianity, the farther execution of his offices, and in respect of the truth of God.

Q. *What was the necessity of it, in respect of our faith and happiness?*

A. If Christ is not risen, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins, they that are fallen asleep are perished.

Q. *How was it necessary in confirmation of Christianity?*

A. If Christ is not risen, our preaching is vain and false, the whole gospel is but a cunningly devised fable, and the author of it a deceiver of the people.

165 *Q.* *How did the glory of his offices depend upon it?*

A. If Christ had not risen, the truth and promise of the Spirit, essential to his prophetic office, had been lost; the

merit and intercession necessary to his priesthood, had been a wanting; and all power in heaven and earth, necessary to his regal dignity, had not been conferred upon him.

Q. How was the truth of God concerned in the resurrection of Christ?

A. The Father had sworn by an oath, that he would raise him up; and declared by the prophetic Spirit, that he would not suffer his Holy One to see corruption, Acts ii. 30, 31.

Q. How does the CERTAINTY of Christ's resurrection appear?

A. The truth of it is abundantly evident from the circumstances and effects of the thing itself; and from the testimonies that have been given of it.

Q. What CIRCUMSTANCES evince the truth of his resurrection?

A. The rolling away of the great stone from the door of the sepulchre by an angel from heaven, which Christ's enemies had sealed and made sure; the order in which the grave clothes were found; the body having been laid in a new sepulchre, prevented any suspicion that it was another; and other dead bodies of saints rose, and appeared to many, shewing the possibility of a resurrection, and doing honour to him who had conquered death and the grave.

Q. What effects of Christ's resurrection further evinced the certainty of it?

A. The effusion of the divine Spirit, the working of miracles, the conversion of multitudes, and the extraordinary gifts which men received, could not flow from a dead, but a risen Jesus.

170 *Q. What testimonies have been given of the resurrection of Christ?*

A. Testimonies of all sorts, human, angelical, and divine.

Q. By what men was the resurrection attested?

A. By apostles, enemies, and others, who saw him alive.

Q. What testimony did the apostles give to it?

A. They unanimously declared that God raised him up the third day, and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God, Even to

me, say they, who did eat and drink with him, after he rose from the dead.

Q. What enemies of Christ attested it?

A. Some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. Pilate also gave an account of it to the Emperor and Roman senate, in whose records these things are said to have been entered. To which might be added, the testimonies of Julian the apostate, and others.

Q. Who besides saw him alive after his resurrection?

A. He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.

175 *Q. What answer may be given to that objection against the resurrection of Christ, that he ought to have appeared openly to all the people and the rulers, rather than to have kept it private among select friends?*

A. It is answered: Those who will not believe the evangelists, would not have been persuaded, though they had seen one risen from the dead, as was evident from the instance of Lazarus; and it was now improper that Christ should again suffer the contradiction of sinners to his face, and therefore declared before, that the world should no more see him after his death; moreover he judged it more fit to spend his short time upon earth with his disciples, than in satisfying the unreasonable scruples of his enemies, who now deserved to be thus punished for their unbelief. Besides all, it was the will of God then as now, that men should live by faith, and that the belief of the resurrection, should not be propagated or supported by any earthly power, influence, or authority whatsoever.

Q. What testimony did the angels give to the resurrection?

A. They told the women who came to the sepulchre, He is not here, but he is risen as he said.

Q. What divine testimony is superadded?

A. When the Father brought again into the world the first begotten, HE SAID, Let all the angels of God worship him. God the Son testified, I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore; and the Holy Ghost also is a witness of the same. If therefore we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater.

Q. What are the effects of Christ's resurrection from the dead?

A. These may be referred partly to God the Father partly to Christ himself, and partly to his people.

Q. What are the effects of it which respect God the Father?

A. Christ was raised from the dead to the glory of God the Father. His truth and faithfulness is illustrated in fulfilling types, promises, and prophecies concerning this matter, Acts xxvi. 12, 13. Also the exceeding greatness of the divine power was displayed in a most glorious manner, in the resurrection of Christ, Eph. i. 19, 20. The justice of God likewise is glorified in it; for when Christ had done his work as a surety, it was but just and equitable that he should be honourably discharged and legally acquitted, being loosed from the cords of death. And the wisdom, goodness, and grace of God, which appeared in the scheme of salvation, would have been defeated had not Christ been raised from the dead.

180 *Q.* What are the consequences of Christ's resurrection, as to himself?

A. He was declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead. This shews that he is Lord of all, both of the dead and of the living; that he hath the keys of hell and death, and can, and will unlock the graves of his people, and set them free, as he hath himself. By this it is a clear case, that Christ hath finished his work here, in fulfilling the law, satisfying justice, and obtaining redemption for us.

Q. What are the fruits of Christ's resurrection, which respect his people?

A. The blessings of the covenant in general, are enjoyed by the saints, in virtue of it; and in particular, he was raised again for our justification; for that is founded rather on Christ's resurrection, than on his death, Rom. viii. 33, 34. Regeneration is another effect of it, and hence the elect of God are said to be begotten again by it, yea to be quickened and raised up together with him; our faith and hope arise with him, for certainly no blessings can be too good for his love to grant, or too great for his power to confer; nor any enemies too strong for him who spoiled principalities and powers on the cross, and hath broken the cords of death, and the bars of the grave; and as he

is the first fruits of them that sleep, even so, doubtless, them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him, who will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

Q. What capital improvement ought we to make of this capital doctrine?

A. Thus to judge, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and ROSE AGAIN.

Q. How long did Christ continue on earth after his resurrection?

A. Forty days.

Q. How was he employed during that time?

A. Confirming the faith of his disciples, and instructing them in the nature and government of his spiritual kingdom.

185 *Q. Did he himself then in person fully open up the Christian system to his followers, before he left this earth?*

A. He did not: There were many articles most essential and fundamental which they could not then bear. Howbeit, says he, when the Spirit is come, he will guide you into all truth. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. Indeed the Christian dispensation, properly speaking, did not fully open till Jesus was glorified, and the apostles received the promise of the Father upon the day of Pentecost.—From whence I conclude, that we are not to form our ideas of Christianity from what is narrated in the gospels only, but from the complete canon of the New Testament, as founded upon, and inseparably connected with the Old.

Q. Would it have been profitable for the church, had Christ continued much longer on earth as their head?

A. It was more expedient for us, that he should go to the Father; nor could he be otherwise present with each of them, than by his Spirit, now that they were to be his witnesses through all the world.

Q. How may we be certain of Christ's admission into heaven?

A. From its having been both prefigured and predicted under the Old Testament; from its being attested by the apostles, and holy angels; and from the blessed fruits of his actual ascension to the throne of his glory.

Q. In what capacities did he ascend?

A. As a victorious conqueror, to receive a triumph; as our fore-runner, to open the way to glory; as the bridegroom and husband of his church, to prepare a place for us; as the great high priest of our profession, to become an advocate with the Father, and to give boldness and confidence to every true worshipper; as our exalted king, to rule over the house of David for ever; as the good shepherd, to feed and lead his flock, and lift them up for ever; and as our glorious representative, to take possession of the purchased inheritance.

Q. What supporting promise did he leave with his people at parting from them?

A. If I go not away, says he, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

190 *Q. For what purposes doth he send the Spirit?*

A. As an interpreter, to teach us all things; as a reprover, to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; as a comforter, to abide with us for ever; as a witness, to testify of Christ; as a guide, to lead us into all truth; as a remembrancer; and in fine, to apply the whole purchased redemption, in pursuance of his office and undertaking in covenant.

Q. Where was the Mediator set when he ascended?

A. He sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Q. What is meant by the RIGHT HAND of the throne of God.

A. The dignity and glory of Christ in his exalted state; his joy and satisfaction; his dominion and power over all creatures; and the excellency and administration of his mediatorial kingdom.

Q. What is implied in his SITTING at the right hand of God?

A. The exaltation of his human nature in heaven above all creatures, who stand and bow before the throne; his safety and security from all attempts of enemies; and his duration and continuance in this glorious state for ever.

Q. For what ends doth Christ sit at the right hand of God?

A. For manifestation of his own, and his Father's glory; for the good of the church militant, and to complete the joy of the church triumphant.

195 Q. *What improvement should we make of Christ's sitting at the right hand of God?*

A. We ought to hearken diligently to him who speaketh to us from heaven; to set our affections on things that are above; to labour to enter into his rest, and cultivate a desire to depart and to be with Christ; and from this we may be confident that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church.

Q. *Since the administration of the covenant of grace is devolved upon Christ himself, how doth he now in his exalted state administer it?*

A. By the written word and preached gospel, and dispensation of the sacraments, accompanying all by the power and energy of the Holy Ghost.

Q. *Of what importance in the administration of the covenant, is the reading and preaching of the gospel?*

A. Hereby the covenant itself is revealed and unfolded, it is fully and freely offered to sinners of mankind without exception; and when the gospel comes not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, those who were strangers are brought into the covenant, and united to Christ the covenant head.

Q. *Whether doth the Spirit most ordinarily accompany the reading or preaching of the word for this purpose?*

A. As saith cometh by hearing, it pleaseth God by the foolishness of PREACHING to save them that believe. In preaching the Lord Jesus, the hand of the Lord is with his servants, whereby multitudes believe and are turned to the Lord.

Q. *What is the efficacy of the word, in the conversion of sinners, compared to in scripture?*

A. It is likened to fire, which purifies and refines; to a hammer, which rendeth the heart of stone; to rain, which refreshes and mollifies; to light, which guides and directs; and it is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

200 Q. *What use doth the Spirit make of the word written*

34 *Of the SEALS of the Covenant of Grace.*
and preached to those who are within the covenant?

A. They are thereby built up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

Q. *Whether are the sacraments designed to confirm the word, or to strengthen our faith?*

A. The whole of revelation being the true sayings of God, cannot admit of higher confirmation than his attestation and oath; but the sacraments are necessary to strengthen and confirm our faith.

Q. *What is the difference between the word and sacraments, considering both as means of grace and salvation?*

A. The word may be effectual to this end without the sacraments, but the sacraments cannot avail without the word.

Q. *How many seals are appended to the covenant of grace?*

A. Under the old dispensation of the covenant there were two; circumcision and the passover: and under the new, as many, viz. baptism and the Lord's supper.

Q. *How have they been usually called?*

A. The seals of this covenant were called by the Latin church, SACRAMENT; and by the Greek church MYSTERIES.

205 *Q.* *What is meant by the word SACRAMENT?*

A. The word SACRAMENT originally signifies the oath which the Roman soldiers bound themselves by to their general; and it is our oath of allegiance, wherein we swear fidelity to Jesus the Captain of our salvation. As they swore that they would never desert their colours in the day of battle; we also solemnly engage to maintain irreconcilable war against all the enemies of Christ, without and within us, fighting resolutely under his banner against sin, Satan, and the world; and this at the peril of eternal damnation.

Q. *What is meant by the word MYSTERY?*

A. It signifies that besides the outward and visible signs, there is in this ordinance, some secret or hidden meaning which is to be diligently attended unto.

Q. *In what respects are the sacraments called SEALS?*

A. They may be considered as God's seals, and as our seals.

Q. *How are they to be considered as God's seals?*

A. As they are ordinances given by him for the confirmation of our faith, that he will be our covenant God, and that he makes over Christ and his benefits as ours.

Q. How are they to be considered as our seals?

A. As we visibly profess to vouch this God to be our God, and give up ourselves unto him to be his people; and desire to be made partakers of Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant in his own way.

210 *Q.* Who have a right to the sacraments?

A. Those who are credible professors of the Christian religion have a right before men, but real saints only have a right before God.

Q. For what end hath Christ instituted sacraments in his church?

A. To keep up the remembrance of his death, to give his people delightful communion with himself, and with one another; to confirm his covenant with them, and their obligations to him; to strengthen their graces, and to distinguish them from the rest of the world.

Q. Do the sacraments necessarily promote salvation?

A. They have no power in themselves to answer this end, otherwise all who receive them would certainly be saved.

Q. Doth their efficacy depend upon the piety and intention of the administrator?

A. By no means; who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but stewards of the mysteries of God, who may indeed pray for the blessing, but cannot possibly confer that grace which is the work and gift of Christ.

Q. How then do the sacraments become effectual to salvation?

A. Only by the blessing of Christ, and by the efficacious working of the Holy Ghost.

215 *Q.* When was the sacrament of circumcision instituted?

A. When the covenant of promise was renewed with Abraham, and confined in a peculiar manner to his family.

Q. What was signified by circumcision?

A. The destruction of original sin; the dedication of the person to God, and the necessity of regeneration, or being cut off from the first Adam as a covenant head, and being grafted into Christ.

Q. Why was the sacrament administered to the children of the faithful?

A. Because God had promised in the covenant to be a God likewise to their seed, and therefore it was expressly enjoined that every male child should be circumcised the eighth day.

Q. When was the sacrament of the passover instituted?

A. At the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

Q. Why was it called the passover?

A. Because the destroying angel PASSED OVER their houses, when he smote all the first born of Egypt.

220 *Q. And why did the destroyer then pass over the houses of the Israelites?*

A. Because their door posts and lintels were sprinkled with the blood of the passover lamb, signifying that the blood of Christ sprinkled on our conscience, is a sure defence from divine wrath.

Q. Why was it required that the paschal lamb should be a male of the first year, and without blemish?

A. To signify the purity and excellence of Christ, who should offer himself for us without spot, in the prime and vigour of life.

Q. Why was it to be roasted, to be eaten wholly, with bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread, by the whole congregation at once?

A. To represent the SEVERITY of Christ's sufferings; that he must be WHOLLY received by faith; and that in the exercise of REPENTANCE, without delay and with sincerity of heart; and to signify that there is enough in Christ for the salvation of the whole church at once.

Q. Wherein do the Sacraments of the Old Testament differ from those of the New?

A. The sacraments of the Old Testament represented Christ as to come. but more obscurely; whereas those of the New, represent him clearly as already come.

Q. Wherein do baptism and the Lord's supper agree?

A. In that God is the author, and Christ is the matter of both; both are seals of the same covenant, and imply engagements to the same duties; both ought to be publicly dispensed, and that by ministers of the gos-

and they are both to continue in the church till Christ's second coming.

225 Q. *What blessings are sealed to us in baptism?*

A. Our ingraftment into Christ, and a participation of the benefits of the new covenant.

Q. *What benefits of the new covenant are more especially represented and applied in baptism?*

A. Regeneration, justification, and adoption; all which flow directly from union with Christ, who is our life, our righteousness, and our elder brother.

Q. *How is our baptism to be improved by us?*

A. By serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the ends for which Christ instituted it; by being humbled for our sinful defilement, our falling short of, and walking contrary to our engagements; and by endeavouring to live by faith, to have our conversation in holiness and righteousness, and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body.

Q. *When should we thus improve our baptism?*

A. All our life long, especially in time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others.

Q. *Is private baptism commendable, even if some pittance should, on that account, be given to the poor?*

A. I think not: it clandestinely obtrudes members into the visible church; occasions among some, at least, the irreverent administration of baptism; too much separates the ordinance of teaching from it; confirms the ignorant in the Popish fancy of its absolute necessity; robs Christians of an opportunity of renewing their vows; and deprives the parents and child of the benefit of the prayers of a whole congregation.

230 Q. *Wherein do baptism and the Lord's supper differ?*

A. Baptism seals an entrance into the church, and implantation into Christ, and therefore is administered but once, and to infants as well as others; whereas the Lord's supper is a seal of spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, and therefore to be received frequently, and only by persons who can examine themselves.

Q. *By what names is this last sacrament usually called?*

A. It is called the eucharist, the feast, the communion, and the Lord's supper.

38. *Of the Sacramental Elements and Actions.*

Q. Why is it called the eucharist or thanksgiving?

A. Because Christ gave thanks when he appointed it, and we are to receive it with thankfulness.

Q. Why said to be the feast?

A. Because of the ample provision that is here set before us, and the joy wherewith it is to be received.

Q. Why is it designed the communion?

A. Because of the intercourse there is in this ordinance between Christ the head, and the members of his body. In it he communicates his favour and grace, of his fulness and salvation; and they communicate their thanksgiving, love, and gratitude. And the members likewise enjoy delightful communion with one another, for we being many are but one body. And we eat of the same bread, and drink of the same cup, in token that we derive our life from one common fountain, that we are all actuated by the same spirit, and have as near an interest and affection for one another, as the members of the same body.

235 *Q. Why stiled the Lord's supper?*

A. Because it is spiritual repast for the soul, as meat is for the body; and it is a chief banquet in the family of Christ, as supper was among the antients; and likewise because it was instituted in the evening after the last passover was eaten, and under the last dispensation. And it is emphatically called the LORD's supper to intimate the authority and excellence of it.

Q. What elements are to be used in the Lord's supper?

A. Common bread and the fruit of the vine.

Q. Ought not every communicant to receive both the bread and the wine?

A. Yes; they are to take and eat of the bread; and with reference to the cup, Christ saith, Drink ye ALL of it.

Q. What is signified by the bread and the wine?

A. The body and blood of Christ.

Q. What is our faith to terminate upon, when the body and blood of Christ are represented by these elements?

A. His incarnation, obedience, and death.

240 *Q. What sacramental actions are used?*

A. They are such as respect either the administrator, or the receivers of this ordinance.

Q. What are the sacramental actions on the part of Christ, the first administrator?

A. He took the elements, blessed them, or gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave both the bread and the wine to his disciples.

Q. What may the administrator's TAKING of the elements lead us to think upon?

A. Christ's undertaking the work of our redemption, and for this end assuming an holy human nature, that he might have somewhat to offer.

Q. What is meant by his blessing of these elements?

A. The setting apart so much of them, as shall be used, from a common, to a sacred use: and that this sacrament is a means of Christ's blessing his people.

Q. Are the bread and the wine turned into the real body and blood of Christ by ministerial consecration?

A. By no means: The supposition of such a change is contrary to the testimony of all our senses, the judgment of reason, the declaration of scripture, the nature of a sacrament, &c. &c.

245 *Q. What views should we have as to the breaking of the bread, and pouring out of the wine?*

A. The breaking of Christ's body, and pouring out of his soul unto death.

Q. What is meant by GIVING the bread and the wine to communicants?

A. That Christ is his own and his father's free gift to sinners of mankind, for life and salvation.

Q. What are the sacramental actions on the part of communicants?

A. They take and partake of both elements, and divide them among themselves.

Q. What is the language of communicants TAKING those elements?

A. It is an emblem of the saints receiving Christ by the hand of faith, and all the blessings of grace with him, agreeable to the offer.

Q. What is meant by their partaking of these?

A. That there must be a particular application of Christ to the soul.

250 Q. *Why should communicants divide the elements among themselves?*

A. In imitation of the practice of Christ and his apostles, and to testify their mutual love and union, as hereby they become one bread.

Q. *Are the different elements designed to signify different parts of Christ's coming?*

A. We ought rather to consider the one and the other as visible external signs of the same things.

Q. *Whether should the sacrament be received sitting, standing, or kneeling?*

A. Sitting seems to come nearest to Christ's example, and best suits with the nature of a feast, and the LORD's table; whereas kneeling hath the appearance, at least; of Popish idolatry and superstition.

Q. *When did our Lord institute this sacrament?*

A. In the same night wherein he himself was betrayed.

Q. *For what end was this ordinance appointed?*

A. To shew forth the death of Christ till he come again.

255 Q. *Is it only the last scene of his sufferings we are to commemorate here?*

A. We ought to remember with application, the whole course of his obedience and sufferings from the cradle to the grave.

Q. *What is it about the death of Christ we are to remember in this ordinance?*

A. The NECESSITY of it, to deliver from going down to the pit; the TRUTH of it, that he really underwent these things; and the sufficiency thereof, as available to the salvation of a lost world.

Q. *In what manner should we here remember the death of Christ?*

A. Fiducially, humbly, mournfully, thankfully, and affectionately.

Q. *To whom do we shew forth or represent the death of Christ?*

A. To God the supreme judge, to angels, to devils, to the world, and to our own consciences.

Q. *How are we to shew it forth to God the judge of all?*

A. Presenting it by faith, as a complete satisfaction to his justice in our room and stead.

260 Q. *How are we to shew it forth to the holy angels?*

A. As the ground of our reconciliation to, and communion with them.

Q. *Why to Satan?*

A. Improving this atonement as an answer to all his accusations, as a reason against yielding to any temptation, and as the only way in which we overcome and bruise him under our feet.

Q. *What do we mean by shewing forth the Lord's death before the world?*

A. We openly profess to the world, that we glory in his cross only, as the sum and centre of all our principles, the foundation of our hope and confidence, and the reason of our non-conformity to the world.

Q. *Why shew it forth to our consciences?*

A. Improving it to quiet our troubled minds under a sense of guilt, and as the only means to purge conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Q. *How oft are we to shew forth the death of Christ?*

A. The first Christians seem to have done it every Sabbath, and we ought so to do as oft as we have opportunity.

265 Q. *Is not Christ really present in this ordinance?*

A. Yes; he is graciously, though invisibly, present here, as in other ordinances where his name is recorded.

Q. *Who are worthy receivers of this ordinance?*

A. True believers, and they only.

Q. *What are they made partakers of?*

A. Of Christ's body and blood, with all his benefits.

Q. *Why are the benefits of the new covenant called Christ's?*

A. Because he is the purchaser, the proprietor, and dispenser of them among his people.

Q. *What is the fruit of their partaking of all his benefits?*

A. Their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

270 Q. *Whose duty is it to receive the Lord's supper?*

A. All Christians come to mature age are obliged to it by the law of God; but believers only have a real right to it, and such believers only as have grace in suitable exercise are actually fit for it.

Q. *Are graceless persons, come to age, guilty, if they neglect this ordinance?*

A. Yes; they practically renounce their baptism, account the death of Christ as unworthy of remembrance, and despise sacramental blessings.

Q. What course should they take, seeing whether they receive or neglect this ordinance they offend?

A. Their immediate duty is to comply with the gospel-call, and receive Christ as offered; and thus being brought into a gracious state, they are habitually prepared for this, and every duty or difficulty.

Q. Is it not a dreadful prostitution of this sacrament to oblige men to receive it to qualify them for civil offices?

A. Doubtless it is.

Q. Who are to be kept back from the communion table?

A. The grossly ignorant, and openly profane.

275 *Q.* Why ought the grossly ignorant to be kept back?

A. Because they cannot discern the Lord's body, or examine themselves.

Q. Why ought the openly scandalous to be set aside?

A. Because there can be no communion between righteousness and unrighteousness, between Christ and Belial; and therefore with such we ought not to eat.

Q. Whether then is this a converting or confirming ordinance?

A. It is intended for the spiritual nourishment of true believers, whilst the written and preached word are designed for conversion and begetting of faith.

Q. What preparation is necessary for this ordinance?

A. Both habitual and actual preparation.

Q. Wherein does habitual preparation consist?

A. In being clothed upon with the garment of salvation, Christ's righteousness imputed; and having his grace implanted in our hearts.

280 *Q.* What actual preparation is necessary?

A. Besides attending public ordinances, self-examination, dedication, meditation, and prayer, are required.

Q. Is self-examination the duty of those only who communicate for the first time?

A. No; it is the duty of every person, every time he communicates.

Q. Have we not reason to hope, that if we be careful to examine ourselves, we may come to some distinct knowledge concerning our state?

A. We have; otherwise the command to this duty would be insignificant; and we know that many holy men in all ages, have been very successful in proving and trying their own selves.

Q. What is the most successful way of examining ourselves?

A. We ought to retire from the hurry of the world, resolve to deal impartially, compare our actions and behaviour with the word of God; and cry to God that he would search and try us, and see if there be any wicked thing in us.

Q. What are we particularly to examine ourselves about?

A. Of our interest in Christ, of our sins, of our wants, of our desires, of the truth and measure of our graces, of our new obedience, forgiveness of injuries, &c.

285 *Q. Why should we prove ourselves, whether Christ be in us, so particularly before this ordinance?*

A. Because without union to him, there can be no communion with him, or receiving of saving blessings from him.

Q. How may we know, upon self-examination, that Christ is NOT in us?

A. If we are utterly ignorant of his person, natures, offices, and undertaking; if we never saw our absolute need of him, as the only Saviour; if we do not submit to his kingly government, as well as rely on the righteousness of his priesthood; in short, while we live in a wilful contempt of his laws, persist in the commission of any known sin, or in the total neglect of any commanded duty, we are not in Christ, we are yet disapproved.

Q. How may we be satisfied that Christ the hope of glory is formed in us.

A. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.

Q. Why are we to examine ourselves concerning our sins?

A. That we may be humbled for them, and earnestly seek to be washed from them in the blood of Christ.

Q. When should we conclude that our sins are not consistent with a state of grace?

A. When they are committed wilfully and presumptuously; when obstinately persisted in, and yet sit lightly upon the conscience; when we frequently relapse into the same gross sins, without watching against predominant evils; and if sin is gaining more strength over us, notwithstanding the means of grace we enjoy.

290 *Q.* *When may we hope that our sinful infirmities are yet consistent with a gracious state?*

A. When we watch, and strive, and pray against every sin and temptation to it; when we groan under a sense of it, crying for deliverance; and when we carefully and habitually improve the death, doctrines, and example of Christ for the total destruction of the old man with his lusts and affections.

Q. *Why ought we to examine into our wants?*

A. That we may duly prize Christ himself, and the rich provision he hath made in this ordinance.

Q. *What particular wants may even true believers find about themselves upon examination?*

A. Though they may have some good hope, they may want full assurance of an interest in Christ; though they have faith, they may not always have the joy of it; they may want more enlargement of heart, and raised affections in holy duties; farther experience of the grace of God, and the delight of communion with him; a greater degree of establishment in trying and perilous times, and zeal for the honour of God when the love of many waxes cold; deeper impressions of the love of Christ, and more conformity to his example in all things.

Q. *Seeing hypocrites and the unregenerate may have some kind of desires after Christ, how may we know whether our desires are gracious?*

A. If they terminate primarily and principally upon the person of Christ, and then upon his benefits; if they go out after him above all things, and are vehement, active, and abiding, yea increasing; in fine, if we can appeal to himself that the DESIRE OF OUR SOUL is toward him, and the remembrance of his name.

Q. *What graces are we to enquire after?*

A. After the measure and kind of our knowledge, faith, repentance, love, hope, fear, humility, gratitude, assurance, peace, joy, forgiveness of injuries, &c.

295 Q. *How may we be sure that our KNOWLEDGE is of a competent measure?*

A. If we have acquired distinct views of the divine persons, perfections, and laws; of man's creation, fall, and inability to recover himself; of Christ, in his natures, offices, and righteousness; and of the covenant of grace, in its freedom, fulness, and stability, together with the seals thereof.

Q. *When may we conclude our knowledge to be of the saving kind?*

A. If it is experimental, humbling, increasing, and practical.

Q. *What is the necessity of faith in this ordinance?*

A. It is necessary to feed upon Christ crucified.

Q. *Have all real Christians the same measure of faith?*

A. They have not; some are strong in faith, not staggering through unbelief; others of little faith.

Q. *What are the marks of strong faith?*

A. It leads to self-denial, carries through difficult duties, supports under cross dispensations, promotes boldness and importunity at the throne of grace, and causes the believer to triumph in Christ, as knowing that nothing shall separate from his love.

300 Q. *What are the symptoms of weak faith?*

A. A degree of confidence in our own righteousness and strength, perpetual doubts and fears about our state, sinful haste to avoid danger, and staggering at the promise when we meet with temptation, desertion, or unfavourable dispensations.

Q. *What are the evidences of saving faith?*

A. It accounts all things but loss for Christ, worketh by love to God and man, tends to purify the heart, oppose sin, overcome the world, resist the devil, and to promote good works of every kind.

Q. *What are the signs of reigning unbelief?*

A. An habitual neglect of heavenly and spiritual concerns, delays in closing with Christ, and particular ap-

plication of the gospel; untenderness of life and conversation, hardness of heart, apostacy from God, and final despair.

Q. What is the use of REPENTANCE in this ordinance?

A. To mourn for sin, as having pierced the Lord of glory.

Q. How may we know if our repentance is unto life?

A. If it is habitual, if we grieve for sin as offensive to God, and if we carefully turn from all sin, both in heart and life.

305 *Q. How may legal and evangelical repentance be particularly distinguished?*

A. Legal repentance flows from a view of God's justice and wrath in his threatenings and judgments, and the convict is chiefly affected with the GUILT of sin, and of some gross sin in particular, and he turns only from some outward acts of sin; so that his sorrow, if it stops here, worketh death: whereas evangelical repentance arises from faith's view of God's holiness, manifested in the precepts of the law, and of his mercy and love in the death of Christ; and the penitent is chiefly affected with the FILTH of sin, and grieved for secret sins, whereby God is dishonoured; and this contrition turns from the love of every sin, and leads to eternal life.

Q. When should we in a particular manner essay and seek the actual exercise of repentance?

A. After shameful backslidings; when under severe trials, or if great judgments are impending; when about to ask any singular mercy from God; and before any difficult work, or most solemn service.

Q. What should we do to obtain the actual exercise of repentance?

A. We ought to meditate upon the nature, number, aggravations, and desert of our sins; and cry that the Saviour exalted may give us both repentance and remission.

Q. What occasion is there here for the exercise of love?

A. Without love there can be no communion with God.

Q. How may we know if our love to Christ be sincere?

A. If it is superlative and universal, and if it constrains us to keep his commandments, and to hate every false and wicked way.

310 Q. *Can we truly love God while we live at variance with our neighbour?*

A. It is not possible: If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, HE IS A LIAR; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.

Q. *How may we know if our love to the brethren be such as by it we may conclude, that we have passed from death to life?*

A. If we esteem them because of their relation to God as his children, to Christ as his members, and to the Spirit as his sanctified ones; if we value them ALL, strangers as well as relations, and that notwithstanding some differences of opinion; if we regard them CONSTANTLY, when despised and persecuted, as well as when honoured and exalted, in adversity as in prosperity; if we love them from a pure heart FERVENTLY, so as to prefer their company, and delight in it above that of any other. In short, if we are helped to sympathise with them both in their sorrows and joys, to serve them and minister to their necessities, and to bear with injuries from them, and cover their faults from others.

Q. *What are the evidences of that HOPE which maketh not ashamed?*

A. It is not like the presumption of the profane, who trust that however they live, he that made them will freely have mercy on them at last; nor the hope of the hypocrite which shall likewise perish, because founded only on a form of godliness, and a name to live; but the hope of a believer is built upon the sure foundation, Christ; and this hope, as the anchor of the soul, keeps him from being carried down the stream of worldly pleasures, or dashed on the rocks of despair; yea, this hope of salvation refines the soul from sense and sin, as Christ (the object of) our hope is pure.

Q. *Why is holy FEAR so necessary to right communicating?*

A. As we then make a near approach unto God, who will be sanctified in them who come nigh him; if herein we would serve the Lord acceptably, it must be with reverence and godly fear.

Q. How may we know, upon self examination, if our fear is servile or of the slavish kind?

A. If it only respects the majesty and power of God, and his awful threatnings, occasioning the sinner to dread him as an enemy, and disposing him to fly from his presence; and if the fear of God prevents the commission only of some gross outward sins, from the terror of hell and wrath, but still leaves in the soul a reserve for certain secret beloved lusts, unknown to the world.

315 *Q. When may we conclude, on the other hand, that our fear of God is filial and reverential?*

A. Our fear of God may be deemed filial, if it respects the goodness as well as the greatness of God, his forgiving mercy and free promises, as well as his dreadful threatenings and justice; if it lead us to love him as a father, to delight in his presence, and to stand in awe to offend him by secret wickedness of any kind.

Q. Why is the grace of HUMILITY so necessary here?

A. Because we are quite unworthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which is here shewn unto us.

Q. How may we know if, as the elect of God, we have put on humbleness of mind?

A. If we account ourselves the chief of sinners; are ashamed of both our sins and duties before God; and are grieved for our pride and self-conceit.

Q. When may we conclude that we are truly THANKFUL?

A. If we have a grateful sense of the least of God's mercies, but chiefly of Christ his unspeakable gift.

Q. How may we know if our ASSURANCE of God's love be well grounded.

A. If it makes us more humble and self-denied, excites to the practice of every commanded duty, and begets more ardent desire after fuller conformity to God here, and the complete enjoyment of him hereafter.

320 *Q. What are the marks of true PEACE, which is another grace of the Spirit?*

A. It flows from justification through faith in the blood of atonement, promotes a stated warfare with all known sin, and a sincere endeavour to please God, with a constant fear of offending him.

Q. How may the JOY of believing be distinguished from the laughter of fools?

A. The believer rejoiceth in Christ Jesus, and in what he has done, and is doing; as also his rejoicing is this, the testimony and answer of a good conscience; and his joy is enlivening, enlarging, lasting, and sanctifying; whereas the opposite is but for a moment, is followed with heaviness, and at last everlasting sorrow; in short, it is earthly, sensual, and devilish.

Q. Is not forgiveness of injuries highly necessary upon such an occasion?

A. Certainly; we must not keep this feast with the heaven of malice and wickedness. We are required therefore first to be reconciled to our brother, and then to come and offer our gift.

Q. When do we indeed forgive those who trespass against us?

A. When we study to forget as well as forgive the offence, considering how prone we ourselves are to offend both God and man; and if we can now love those who injured us as brethren, and be earnestly solicitous for their salvation as well as our own.

Q. Are the graces of the spirit separable from one another?

A. They are not, but stand connected as so many links in a golden chain; so that if, upon self examination, we certainly perceive one or other of them in our hearts, and shining in our lives, we may safely conclude that the whole group of them is there likewise, though others at the time may be less discernible.

325 *Q. Why is NEW OBEDIENCE necessary in order to right communicating?*

A. Because without this, in spite of all marks to the contrary, we may conclude that our state is Christless, that our graces are counterfeit and reprobate gold and silver, that we are yet enemies to God in our hearts, that our sacrifices are an abomination before God, and that the wrath of God shall inevitably fall upon the finally impenitent and disobedient.

Q. Why is the obedience of worthy receivers called NEW?

A. Because it flows from new principles, faith and love; is influenced by new motives, the grace of God; and the

love of Christ; is performed in a new manner, by assistance of the spirit of power and might; and is directed to new ends, the glory of God, and edification of others.

Q. How is the new obedience of true believers V181- BLY distinguished from the appearances and professions that others may make?

A. It is UNIVERSAL, respecting the whole law; it is CHEARFUL, the law of God being his delight; it is IMMEDIATE, the believer making haste to keep the commandments; is performed with HUMILITY, still accounting himself an unprofitable servant; and it is PERSEVERING, his heart being inclined to perform God's statutes always, even unto the end.

Q. Can the obedience of professors be sincere in other respects, who habitually neglect this ordinance?

A. It cannot be imagined; this being not only a duty equally indispensable as others, but also a most delightful and beneficial privilege.

Q. May one, who, after self-examination, is still in doubt concerning his state, receive the sacrament notwithstanding?

A. He may, if he unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity.

330 *Q. What ought we to MEDITATE upon, in preparing for the Lord's supper?*

A. Upon the greatness and glory of that God with whom we have to do, our own vileness and unworthiness, the freedom and stability of the new covenant; but in a particular manner, let us here contemplate the love of Christ, the nature of sin, and the declaration that here is given of the righteousness and justice of God.

Q. How does the love of Christ shine in the representation that is here made of it?

A. It appears in a most astonishing light, and as what altogether passeth knowledge, being vented in such a manner towards us, when we were enemies by wicked works. Love unsolicited and unmerited brought him down from the throne of glory, love clothed him with our frail nature, love urged him on through all the painful steps of his afflicted life; the water of trouble was never able to quench it, nor the floods of persecution to drown it. Love put

the cup of trembling into his hands, and made him drink the bitter dregs thereof; his love continued till he cried, It is finished. When he rose again, love was his first expression. Love carried him to the right hand of God, and there he still shews his unchangeable affection by ever living to make intercession for us; and his love will make him appear a second time to our complete salvation.

Q. In what colours does sin appear in the representation of Christ crucified?

A. Never did sin appear in such black colours as when it was written in a Saviour's sweat, and tears, and blood. The cries of infants, the pains of sickness, the groans of wretchedness, the agonies of the expiring, and all the awful horrors of death, serve in some measure to tell us what an evil and bitter thing sin is, which could have occasioned such effects; but in the sufferings of Christ we see it to be indeed exceeding sinful, when he agonizes under the load of it, and is sore amazed, yea, exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. How should we then loath sin, and ourselves by reason of it, while we here see its abominable nature and rueful effects?

Q. And how is the righteousness of God declared in this awful transaction?

A. In the light of this ordinance, we see the matter thus stated, that

“ Die man, or justice must; unless for him

“ Some other able, and as willing, pay

“ The rigid satisfaction.”—— MILTON.

Then said Christ, Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will. Upon this, behold the righteous severity of God! he spared not his own Son, but bruised and put him to grief, yea, delivered him to the death for us all! See here what a flaming sword justice holds! And tremble to think that nothing but the blood of God himself could expiate guilt, and such a ransom deliver from going down to the pit.

Q. For what things are we to PRAY before communicating?

A. For due preparation, for gracious assistance and acceptance, and for pardon of sinful miscarriages therein.

335 Q. *What is the danger of approaching this ordinance without suitable preparation?*

A. They who do so are in danger of eating and drinking judgment to themselves.

Q. *What judgments do they expose themselves unto?*

A. To temporal strokes, likewise to spiritual plagues, and if mercy prevent not, to eternal condemnation.

Q. *Does unworthy communicating pollute the ordinance to others?*

A. No; he who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to HIMSELF only.

Q. *Is the guilt of unworthy communicating unpardonable?*

A. No; the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from this, as from all other sins.

Q. *What is required of them who receive the Lord's supper in the instant of communicating?*

A. Affectionately to meditate upon the sufferings of Christ, to feed upon him by faith, and to renew covenant with God, and love to all the saints.

340 Q. *What is it to renew covenant with God at his table?*

A. To receive Christ a-new, who is given for a covenant to the people, and in so doing, again to surrender ourselves to the Lord, to be his only, wholly, and for ever.

Q. *What is it to surrender ourselves to the Lord to be his ONLY.*

A. To be his in opposition to all rivals and competitors, such as sin, Satan, and the world.

Q. *What is it to be his WHOLLY?*

A. It is to devote ourselves deliberately, chearfully, and sincerely to be the Lord's, in all that we are, soul and body, and all that we have, whether gifts, graces, or worldly comforts.

Q. *What base ends should we guard against when receiving the Lord's supper?*

A. Every one should be aware of supposing that hereby he atones for past sins, or can cloke any wicked practice he is now living in, or purchase heaven; not to be influenced merely by common custom, and fashion, to gain a good name, or to please ministers and friends.

Q. *Is not self-examination necessary after, as well as before the sacrament?*

A. Yes; we are seriously to consider how we have behaved ourselves therein, and with what success.

345 *Q.* *If upon enquiry it is found we have profited thereby, how ought we to carry?*

A. We are to bless God for it, beg the continuation thereof, watch against relapses, fulfil our vows, and encourage ourselves to a more frequent attendance on that ordinance.

Q. *But if we find no present benefit, how then should we demean ourselves?*

A. We are most exactly to review our preparation for, and carriage at the sacrament; wait for the fruit of it in due time; and attend on the same ordinance afterwards, with more care and diligence.

Q. *What are the advantages of worthy communicating?*

A. This ordinance is an instituted mean of making believers farther partakers of Christ, and for conveying the supplies of the Spirit to them for their wilderness state. Here we have our tears dried up, and with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation; and like Elijah, travelling to the mount of Horeb, receive from time to time our spiritual provision, in the refreshment of which we may hold on our way, and wax stronger and stronger, till we come to mount Zion above.

Q. *Has not this ordinance then, as all others, a direct tendency to promote progression and perseverance in evangelical holiness?*

A. That it hath with a witness. If our corruptions are strong, here is grace to mortify them; here we are taught and do receive humility, to supplant pride; heavenly mindedness, instead of the spirit of this world; and purity to the destruction of sin. Are our graces all feeble and weak? where shall we blow the smoking flax into a flame, if not here, where every thing conspires to confirm our faith, to enliven our hope, to kindle our warmest affections, to enlarge our charity, to inspire our zeal, to teach us meekness, to quicken our languor, to encourage our perseverance, to excite our thankfulness; in short, to work in us every divine temper and disposition? This blessed ordinance is designed to strengthen us mightily in the inner

34 *Of our Behaviour after Communicating.*

man, to support us under all discouragements without, and fears within, that we may go from strength to strength, from grace to grace, till we come to that place where we shall go from glory to glory.

Q. How may we know if our communicating has been altogether unworthy?

A. In general, if we have not been renewed by grace; more particularly, ignorant, precipitate, carnal, hypocritical, malicious, stupid, selfish, and hopeless communicating are so unsuitable as to make persons guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

350 *Q. What is the most proper exercise for Christians immediately after retiring from a communion-table?*

A. 1. In secret devotion we should say AMEN to all that hath passed in public; renewing before God the solemn renunciation of sin, and choice of Christ, which we have made, and the hearty purpose we have of abiding by it. 2. We should admire the condescension and grace which we have experienced, silently adoring what is too big for utterance. 3. We should praise God with joyful lips for all his benefits. 4. We should maintain an humble sense of our great imperfections in all our services. 5. We should rejoice in Christ Jesus, and in the fresh testimonies of his love towards us. 6. We should depart with fresh courage to fight the good fight of faith. And, 7. With increasing desires after the kingdom of heaven.

Q. How ought those who are communicants to demean themselves in their daily walk before God and the world?

A. We should hold fast our profession without wavering, carry about with us the dying of the Lord Jesus, and conscientiously perform the duties of our respective stations and relations, both to those of the same family with us, and to those who are around us in the world.

Q. How should the sincerity of professors appear, in the mutual conduct of domestics?

A. We should shew our fidelity to Christ, by our love one toward another, manifested in the careful performance of relative duties; the master ruling with gentleness, the servant labouring with cheerfulness and fidelity; the husband kind and tender, the wife loving and meek; the fa-

ther mixing parental affection with correction, the child manifesting filial love with dutiful submission;—and so in every case.

Q. How should Christians adorn their profession in converse with mankind?

A. In the uprightness of all our dealings, in the meekness of our conversation, in being temperate in all things, more loving and spiritual, as having our conversation in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour.

Q. What means may be most conducive toward preserving the influence of this ordinance upon our hearts?

A. We should be watchful in all things, pray without ceasing, give good heed to the word written and preached, and frequent the company of lively Christians.

355 *Q. Is the efficacy of this ordinance limited to the time of its administration?*

A. By no means; this, and the other sacrament too, ought to be improved through the whole of our lives, for all the purposes of resisting temptation, mortifying indwelling corruption, and for growing in holiness and communion with God.

Q. When shall it be made appear, who are, and who are not worthy communicants?

A. At Christ's second appearance and kingdom, he will separate between the wise and foolish virgins, the slothful and diligent servants, the sheep and the goats; and will declare, even concerning many who did eat and drink in his presence, that he never knew them; but every sincere believer shall be received into the joy of our Lord.

Q. Is his coming again then an event absolutely certain?

A. The very words of institution refer to it; and this the holy men of God asserted all along as infallibly certain. Christ himself oft comforted his disciples with the prospect of it, and forewarned his enemies of their danger then; and the angels who attended his ascension also said, this same Jesus who is taken up into heaven, SHALL COME AGAIN in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Q. In what manner will he appear the second time?

A. Quickly, as in the twinkling of an eye; unexpected-

ly, as a thief in the night; openly, every eye shall see him, and with power and great glory.

Q. What is that great glory in which he will come?

A. He will come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and in the glory of all his mighty angels.

360 *Q. What may be the immediate forerunners or concomitants of the glorious appearance of the great God our Saviour?*

A. Dreadful commotions in this lower world; some bright appearance, called the sign of the Son of man; he shall descend too, with a great shout, and all who are in their graves shall hear his voice; the trump of God, and voice of the archangel, whereby the general assembly shall be summoned together; and flaming fire shall devour before him, it shall be very tempestuous.

Q. To whom shall the glorious appearance of Christ be most terrible?

A. To all infidels and ungodly scoffers; to all who have called themselves Christians, but have not obeyed the gospel; to such as are now ashamed of him, and of his cause and people; and to all slothful and unprofitable servants, who instead of improving their talents, say in their hearts, the Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite their fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looked not for him, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Q. Why do the saints so much love, look, and pray for this glorious event?

A. Because of the great honours which shall then be conferred upon them; because of the ravishing and transforming sight they shall then have of him; because of the complete victory and triumph they shall then obtain; and because they shall thereafter be ever with the Lord, beholding and sharing of his glory.

Q. How are we to prepare for these awful futurities?

A. We are required to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; to win Christ now, that we may then be found of him in peace; to habitual repentance,

that our sins may be blotted out when the time of refreshing comes from the presence of the Lord; frequently to judge ourselves, but no other; patiently to bear the holy will of God, and even injuries from wicked men; to abound in acts of charity and beneficence to men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith; and in fine, to be holy in all manner of conversation.

AN ABSTRACT of that Solemn Mode of public admission of young Communicants to the Lord's Table, practised in the parish of Kilmarnock.

The minister and elders having each spent several days with candidates for admission, in examining, exhorting, and praying with them; thereafter, at a joint meeting, they conclude upon who are to be taken forward, and whose admission is to be delayed for that time; which judgement is duly intimated to the parties.—Then, upon a week day a sermon is preached suitable to the occasion, and after that the list of young people is called, and each comparing, all stand up immediately before the pulpit. Upon this the minister addresses them in some such terms as follow:

We are told that the Lord looked down from heaven upon the CHILDREN of men, to see if there was any that did understand, and seek God. May we not therefore say concerning you, this is (part of) the generation of them that seek him; that seek thy face, O God of Jacob? And remind you of his gracious promise, if ye seek him, he will be found of you. I love them that love me, and they that seek me EARLY shall find me? What a charming thing is it to see a young person, separating himself from a crowd of sinners, of the same age, rank, and station as himself, nobly rising above the temptations of his younger years, and devoting himself to God through Christ, and minding the great concerns of eternity! None have more gracious invitations to come to Christ, than young sinners; and none have greater reason to expect nearness to God than young saints. The meaning of your appearing here to-day, and soon after this at a communion table, is, that you are no

longer halting between two opinions, whether you will follow a holy and religious course, or walk according to the course of this world. I hope therefore you are now come to a point, and resolve that whatever others do, as for you, you will serve the Lord, having avouched God in Christ to be your God and portion for ever. When early religion is thorough and genuine, it is usually warm and vehement, and much satisfaction is to be expected at this period. Who can describe the fervor of a *first love*? The firmness of the *beginning* of confidence; the kindness of *youth* and the love of espousals, when the soul is first devoted to the Redeemer? Try what of this you feel at present, and earnestly seek higher measures of it this ensuing solemnity. You know, it must be but a very small matter, to appear grave for a little before us, or through the whole of this occasion, which is the first of the kind to you; we are only servants and fellow creatures, but the Lord searcheth the heart; and cursed be the deceiver, especially he who is such, when vowing unto God in so solemn a manner as you are about to do. And therefore in sight and presence of the all-seeing and heart-searching Jehovah, who cannot be deceived, and who will not be mocked, I propose the following questions unto you, as containing the sum of your engagements, and require not only your outward assent to each before this congregation, but also and more especially your inward consent thereunto before God.

I. Do you believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to be indeed the word of God, and testament of Christ; the charter of your privileges, the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and the rule by which you are to be judged at the last day?

II. Agreeable thereto, do you believe in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and all the host of them, who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in all perfection, blessedness, and glory, and whose kingdom and providence ruleth over all?

III. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who came from the bosom of the Father to seek and save lost sinners, to redeem them from sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by fulfilling all

righteousness in their stead, in his birth, life, and sufferings, even unto death?

IV. Do you believe in God the Holy Ghost, the third person of the glorious and ever blessed Trinity, as the great sanctifier of his church, and applier of the redemption purchased by Christ, without whose gracious assistance you can do nothing that is spiritually good, or truly acceptable to God?

V. Are you convinced that you are sinners by nature and by practice, and as guilty criminals in the sight of God, are in a lost and perishing condition, deprived of the image of God, and liable to his wrath and curse, and cannot, by any endeavours of your own, extricate yourselves out of this deplorable state of sin and misery?

VI. Do you from the bottom of your heart approve of, and acquiesce in God's covenant of grace and peace, which he entered into with his chosen from eternity, and which is now exhibited and put to you in the gospel call and offer; and accordingly avouch God for your God and portion, Christ as your Surety and Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost as your guide and sanctifier; and resolve to abide by this choice while you live.

VII. On the other hand, and in terms of the same covenant, are you content and willing to be and live as his redeemed ones, to devote yourselves to him as his peculiar people, his servants and willing subjects; and are resolved through grace to evidence the truth and reality of this profession by a steady and uniform practice of new obedience and an holy life, as long as you live in this world; and desire to have all this ratified and sealed by your partaking of the Lord's supper?

VIII. Do you now own the obligation of your baptismal vows and engagements to be the Lord's, and acknowledge the equity and reasonableness of what your parents did for you in infancy, by presenting you to Christian baptism; and is it not your intention by coming to the Lord's table at this time, to renew those vows more explicitly, every one for himself, by making a voluntary dedication of yourselves to God, to be his only, wholly, and for ever; and to love, fear, and serve him while you live?

IX. Is it not your intention farther, by coming to this holy ordinance, to remember the death of Christ according to his command, to shew it forth till he come again, and to shew your love to him who died for you, and your love to all saints; and so to keep this feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth?

X. Is it not your fixed purpose to cleave to God's covenant, and whatever others do in the world, you will, by divine grace, seek and serve the Lord your God, and him only; renouncing all other lords and masters, particularly the devil, the world, and the flesh: you will cleave to him with full purpose of heart, and endeavour after new obedience?

XI. Do you accept of Christ's people for your beloved friends, firmly resolving to join his little flock, notwithstanding the hatred and reproach of the world, accounting the righteous the excellent ones of the earth, in whom you delight; and purpose, through grace, not to follow the multitude to do evil, but resolutely to avoid all temptations and snares of evil company, saying with David, Depart from me, ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God?

XII. Finally, is it not your fixed resolution to take up your cross, and follow Christ and his holy religion, whatever may befall you, or whatever difficulties you may meet with in the world; to fight the good fight of faith against all your enemies, watching and striving against all temptations to, and occasions of sin, whether of omission or commission; and in short, That denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, you live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, till God shall be pleased to take you out of it by death.

I call heaven and earth to record this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; and that you (profess to) have chosen life, that you may love the Lord your God, and that you may obey his voice, and that you may cleave unto him. Yea, you are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord to serve him. If there is joy in heaven over the man that repenteth, and the Father rejoiceth so much over the return of the pro-

digal, what joy may we suppose will the present appearance yield to the holy angels? And I am certain the day of espousals is the day of the gladness of Christ's heart; and the friends of the Bridegroom rejoice greatly likewise. It would be an additional strength and beauty, as well as joy to this congregation, if you, who are now admitted to full communion with us, shall prove so many holy Christians, and useful members of society whilst you live, and carefully transmit the peculiar truths of Christianity to the race that is to come. Let me now recommend earnestness in religion to you, not only for your great profit, but to prevent apostacy. Believe it, a little religion is a very hard thing to hold. Unless you make God's service your choice you will not long carry it for your burden. You cannot therefore too frequently and explicitly bind yourselves to be the Lord's; and having done so, rest not in your promises to him, but in his promises to you, where alone your safety lies. See Jer. xxxii. 38, 39, 40. Ezek. xl. 19, 20. xxxvi. 27. Encouraged by such great and precious promises, study to follow the Lord fully, walking in all his ordinances and commandments blameless. Let me caution you against both laxness of principles and looseness of morals. Beware then of these modern anti-evangelical principles, which have little or no reference to the person and offices of Christ, and the operations and graces of the Holy Spirit. Relying therefore habitually and only on the priesthood of Christ, his atonement and intercession; firmly believe, hold fast, and earnestly contend for the doctrines which this great prophet hath delivered; and yield unfeigned submission to his will of grace in the gospel, his will of precept in the law, and his will of providence in your lot. Remember that whom he did foreknow, he did predestinate to be conformed to the *image* and *example* of his Son. I only further read to you the following apostolic admonitions, which I leave with your consciences, 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21, iii. 17, 18. Jude, ver. 24, 25.

Let me now drop some exhortation to those, who, this come to years, have never yet thought of applying for admission to the Lord's supper: or who, having been admit-

ted, have quite lost sight of their profession, and turned their back upon this ordinance. But few of these I know, give attendance on such occasions; and but few of them will take leisure to peruse any thing upon this subject. A smut y song over a social glass, theatrical performances of the obscene kind, a trifling romance, the midnight bowl, the card-table, &c. are accounted the best entertainment by the lovers of pleasure; whilst a lucrative bargain, an enlarged and successful trade, the improvement of the farm, &c. are the highest gratifications to the covetous and worldly minded. Doubtless however the servants of religion must not shun to declare the counsel of God. The words of a friend are always dear, but his dying words especially are apt to dwell upon the mind, and to neglect his last commands would be a sure mark of having no friendship for him. Now, this is evidently the case with those who wait not upon this ordinance, *to remember the Lord's death till he come*. They confess that they have no friendship for him, by their disobedience to the things he hath commanded them. They live in the allowed neglect of a positive precept, and therefore bring down upon themselves the reward of transgressors who despise the commandment of the Lord. And that you may see it is no small offence this, do but observe the heavy wrath of God denounced against those who neglected to celebrate the passover, to which our communion answers, *That soul was to be cut off from among the people*. Now, if they which despised Moses's law, died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall ye be thought worthy if ye neglect so great salvation? Be exhorted therefore, you sinners, who are at ease in Zion, to prepare for this ordinance, by receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, as he is offered in the gospel. Do not you want a pardon? Is adoption a despicable privilege? Is spiritual joy an insipid pleasure? or the gift of God's Spirit an unnecessary assistance? Are not all the fruits of our Lord's death and passion, blessings suitable to your necessity? Say now, have you no sensibility of the amazing love of Jesus, who lived, who bled, who groaned, who wept, who suffered, who died for sinners? Will you obstinate-

ly forsake your own mercies, despise the gospel salvation, account the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace! But if love will not move you, at least let fear dismay you. Consider what it is to be an outcast from heaven; to be a stranger to God's covenant, an enemy to Christ, to be marked out for the divine vengeance, to be without a Saviour in the day of judgment, to be exposed to the storms of eternal wrath, to be banished God's presence, to be cast into hell, and have your portion with unbelievers; yet all this, fearful and tremendous as it is, lies against you. Thou, even thou art the man. Not having union with Christ, you are as a branch dried up and withered, which men gather and cast into the fire, and they are burned. Now, consider this, you that forget God, lest by slighting the Saviour, he be provoked to give you up, and you die in your sins, neither sprinkled with his blood, nor clothed with his righteousness, nor partakers of his Spirit, and at last he tear you in pieces when there is none to deliver.

A few words to the whole body of communicants. These things have I written to stir you up to a diligent and evangelical preparation for our Lord's supper. At the same time, be exhorted not to rest on the ordinance itself, or the exactness of your preparation for it. Remember it is not merely cleansing the outside, it is not the abstaining from gross sins only, it is not saying so many prayers, or hearing so many sermons extraordinary, or being strictly regular and devout for a little before and after the communion, that can prove you to be real Christians. The work to be done is heart work, not of the lip, ear, or knee. Evangelical preparation is, taking fuller and faster hold of precious Christ and his righteousness, and seeking the lively exercise of grace. None are meet to approach the Lord's table, who are not studying daily to maintain communion with Christ, and holiness in all manner of conversation. And yet how many come to this ordinance, whose ordinary conduct testifies against them, that they are filthy still? How many, who live habitually in pride and passion, pretend to drink in-

to the meek and humble Jesus? How many whose superficial inquiries into their hearts shew they are afraid to go deeply to work? How many in the interval of these seasons let loose the reins to worldliness and gratification? And some, I fear, horrid to think! suppose the mere act of communicating is the cancelling of past offences, and a clearing of the old score, to begin a new account. Certainly such must be in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity. And the like may be said of those who live in the habitual neglect of known duty, such as, secret prayer, family worship, perusal of the scriptures, a stated attendance upon the ministrations of the word, &c. To neglect these, except some weeks before and after the sacrament, whilst all the interval has been spent in forgetfulness of God and disregard of his service, or in some course of vanity, care, or indulgence; O what hardness and stupidity of conscience is such communicating ready to beget! Thus to eat and drink in God's presence, will at last issue in this, 'Depart from me, I never knew you.'

To conclude: None can profitably partake of the Lord's supper, who have not found acceptance with God through the righteousness of the Saviour, and in consequence experience the mighty power of his grace on their souls, in habitually promoting a life of holiness and communion with God; of justice, love, and peace with all men; of sobriety and circumspection in all manner of conversation. If you are in such a happy state as this, then shall this ordinance be as much to his glory as to your comfort, and you shall find by blessed experience, that you may not only come, but are welcome.

The whole is concluded with prayer for all these different classes, particularly for the young Communicants, after which they are served in tokens. 18 JY 64

N. B. In this mode of admission, no set form of words is used; nor is a public appearance so insisted on, but that upon sufficient reason, or particular desire, individuals, especially old persons, are frequently admitted in private.

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